RETROACTIVE HERESY:
THE INFLUENCE OF EARLY CHRISTIAN HERESIES ON THE IDENTIFICATION AND REACTION TO HERETICAL SECTS DURING THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES

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SUMMARY

The medieval Church viewed itself as Defender of the Faith, the destroyer of the unbelievers, the *wrong* believers. The culminate opposition to heresy, the Inquisition, was the embodiment of an overall sentiment that had been building in all aspects of medieval society. The enemy of the Inquisitor was a singular heretic, as the medieval Church had by then formed a single identification and the doctrinal differences between heretics had ceased to be considered relevant. The central issues of this essay shall be what influenced various spheres of medieval society – the theologians, the papacy and episcopates, and the populace at large – to seek the identification of a single heretic and prompt the ensuing reaction.

By comparing the identification of heresy in the Middle Ages to that of early Christianity, or the Patristic era, the influences upon medieval theologians can therefore be examined in parts. First, this essay analyzes the similarities between Scholastic anti-heretical polemics and Patristic refutations to illustrate how medieval theologians were influenced by a legacy of anti-heretical fervor. Then it examines, from the legacy of fear started by Patristic authors, the impacts on the state of the increasingly literate middle class and how this compares to increasingly drastic accounts of popular anti-heretical fervor. Finally, this essay ascertains how, between the theologians and population, anti-heretical fervor pushed towards a single, universal heretic. In particular, how the Church sought to use titular labels to help mitigate the huge discrepancies between scholarly and popular names for the various so-called heresies spanning regions.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The medieval Church viewed itself as Defender of the Faith, the destroyer of the unbelievers, the *wrong* believers. These heretics were to be reviled and feared as perverters of God's word. The perverters of orthodoxy were, ultimately, not to be distinguished from one another, but rather known by catchphrases. The heretic; the Manichaeans. The culminate opposition to heresy, the Inquisition, was the embodiment of an overall sentiment that had been building in all aspects of medieval society. The enemy of the Inquisitor was a singular heretic, rather than one of many, as the medieval Church had by then formed a single identification and the doctrinal differences between heretics had ceased to be considered relevant. While there exists a rich history on medieval anti-heretical fervor, this essay illustrates one argument as to how the medieval Church reached the point of an Inquisition against 'the medieval Manichee'.[1] Rather than undertaking the Herculean task of examining medieval heresy in its entirety, the issues here shall be what influenced various spheres of medieval society – the theologians, the papacy and episcopates, and the populace at large – to seek the identification of a single heretic and prompt the ensuing reaction.

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[1] Steven Runciman, *The Medieval Manichee: A Study of the Christian Dualist Heresy* (Cambridge, 1947).

Given the medieval concept of a unified heretic, this essay looks into the factors that impacted the means by which medieval heresy was identified and labeled. By comparing the identification of heresy in the Middle Ages to that of early Christianity, or the Patristic era, the influences upon medieval theologians can therefore be examined in parts. The influences examined come in the form of the writings left by the early Christian theologians. The first centuries of Christianity, up until the late fifth century, signify the solidification of a single orthodox doctrine as their anti-heretical writings – the inventive – are composed of a consistent and identifiable rhetoric.

The path to the persecution of the medieval Manichee was a complex one and this essay illustrates the driving force behind one explanation of the complexity. The *definition* of heresy alone was complication enough for the medieval Church, who faced a resurgence of heretical sects near the turn of the millennium. Increased literacy met with a growing discontent with the strict structure of the Roman Church, which arose in the form of "popular" heresies. The Truce of God and the Gregorian reforms, meant to regulate the feudal, warring lifestyle of the nobility and to decrease corruption within the Church, proved to be effective at neither. In the face of both internal and external threats to ecclesiastic authority, heresy was more than just a popular movement for the medieval Church, which was often more concerned with acquiescence and the stability of the ecclesiastic structure than policing heretical thought. The distinctions between new, radical sects of orthodox Christianity and popular heresies were often blurred. Popular movements such as the Beguines, the Humiliati, and even the Franciscans and Dominicans lay on the edge of what was deemed to be orthodox. Furthermore, semi-arbitrary assignation of 'heresy', motivated by such factors as political agendas and a

climate of fear, failed to be sufficiently precise while the numbers of specific doctrinal accounts began to outnumber the inherited list of known heresies. It is in this climate that the methodology of the medieval intellectual, even as late as the Dominican mendicants, sought to identify, understand, and save heretics.

By looking back into the writings of the Patristic theologians, to examine how they defined, identified, and understood heresy, the origins of the medieval response can be better understood. The fevered responses, embodied in the Inquisition and the Albigensian Crusade seem dully disjointed given the rise of intellectual movements and increasing literacy. As such, this essay examines the impact that Patristic writings had on medieval scholars by comparing these writings with the works of the medieval scholastics and ecclesiastic councils. The Patristic writings, already centuries old, shall thus be shown to be a significant influence on the identification and labeling of medieval heretical sects.

By comparing the means by which heresy was defined in early Christianity as compared to the Middle Ages, the influence of early theologians is examined in three parts. First, this essay analyzes the similarities between Scholastic anti-heretical polemics and Patristic refutations to illustrate how medieval theologians were influenced by a legacy of anti-heretical fervor. Then it examines, from the legacy of fear started by Patristic authors, the impacts on the state of the increasingly literate middle class and how this compares to increasingly drastic accounts of popular anti-heretical fervor. Finally, this essay ascertains how, between the theologians and population, anti-heretical fervor pushed towards a single, universal heretic. In particular, how the Church sought to use titular labels to help mitigate the huge discrepancies between scholarly and popular

names for the various so-called heresies spanning regions. Driven by forces from three different directions, the medieval world sought to come to a collective efficiency, where popular dissidence was forced under a heretical umbrella, the title of the medieval 'Manichee'.

The medieval Church could not have foreseen what comprehensible consensus would ultimately yield, from the Albigensian Crusade to the centuries of Inquisitorial surveillance. The consensus was a result of separate efforts all grounded in a desire for universality and a Patristic precedent – which influenced spheres of society from Scholastic rhetoric to popular indignation to ecclesiastic reaction. The structural precision of medieval authors had evolved from the format of Patristic refutations into a clear method of systematized identification. This precision met with an increasingly unyielding dogmatism supported by another Patristic legacy, that of *popular* invective, and both were then manifest under the authority of the thirteenth-century Church. This substantiation of rhetoric, fervency and immediacy yielded an increasingly universal supposition that there was *one* enemy – the heretic or more precisely, the medieval Manichee.

Methods

This era, the Patristic era, was chosen in large part due to the influence of Steven Runciman's *The Medieval Manichee*, which traces the history of so-called Manichaean heresies to the original Patristic Manichee. While Runciman uses 'Manichaean' in the medieval context to refer exclusively to the dualistic heresies he discusses, my conclusive references to the 'Manichaean' heresy is more a symbolic title indicative of medieval

attempts to identify a single, *unified* heresy, drawn from the 'common enemy' in R.I. Moore's *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*.[2]

Based in comparative history and primary documents, this essay focuses on the intellectual history of anti-heretical sentiment – in particular on the changes in perception from the early to the medieval Church. It looks at the heresies of early Christianity, using primary documents to examine why they were deemed heretical and how they were subsequently dealt with and described. The use of the same methods with the medieval heresies, again using primary documents, makes similarities and differences from their predecessors more easily identifiable. The use of ecumenical councils and church decrees assist comparative analysis because of the similarities in structure and content across the two eras. Therefore, by examining Patristic and medieval ecclesiastic writing, this essay uses the writings of medieval authors to propose a source for the intellectual evolution of the perception of heresy during the High Middle Ages.

Secondary sources, such as Runciman and Moore, serve primarily as background information for the formation of the argument. After this, lists of ecclesiastic councils and major theological works pertaining to heresy were compiled for the Late Antique and High Medieval eras. The texts of the councils and works were procured via three means. The first was through online access with sources such as the Internet Medieval Sourcebook – an online repository for primary documents pertaining to the Middle Ages. The second was through use of the texts, both primary and secondary, available to the

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[2] *Ibid.*
R.I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society* (Blackwell Publishing, 1987).

University of Sheffield library system. These included compilations of primary documents, such as *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* and *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe*. Based on the unique ease of access for some of the lesser renowned anti-heretical texts included in the compilations, some of them were also used throughout the research. The third means was through the use of the British Library to gain access to textual copies of more rare works or texts, including secondary sources not available at the University of Sheffield home libraries.

At the conclusion of the document-based research, the information gathered was compiled and organized. Referencing to the use of thematic categories presented in R.I. Moore's *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*, a follow-up to my agreement with his proposal of a medieval society seeking to persecute a 'common enemy'.[3] The argument was outlined and the major points separated into subcategories that are based upon various spheres where distinct Patristic influence can be seen. Each primary document was examined and a further outline was made incorporating each and every text into the point, or points, to which it was deemed relevant. Given the number of primary texts used, this outline was then used to identify the texts that carried the most direct pertinence to the point – including proof of counterarguments. The essay thus seeks to identify how medieval authors might have used the Patristic anti-heretical writings to classify and describe the heresies of their own times. In composing primary sources available from both eras, this essay essentially endeavors to ascertain the extant and influence of Patristic heresies on the response to the heresies of the High Middle Ages.

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[3] Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society* (Blackwell Publishing, 1987).

CHAPTER 2

WHAT MAKES HERESY HERETICAL?

For the Patristic authors of late antiquity, heresy was understood in terms of its etymology. From the Greek word *haeresis*, meaning 'choice', Saint Jerome, Tertullian, the Emperor Theodosius and many others cite the etymologic origin of heresy.[4] It is the implication of personal interpretation and conscious selection of a sect that '[a man] deems best', as Jerome said, that clarifies why heresy became such a fixation for early Christianity.[5] As the orthodox Church went on tirade after tirade against the heretical sects of late antiquity, its self-proclaimed opponents showed remarkably little desire to defend themselves or retaliate – or so Bauer effectively uses surviving evidence to argue.[6] Perhaps, the heretics read *haeresis* as a reader today might, wherein their interpretation of doctrine was *their* decision, thus mitigating any perceived need to retaliate against the proto-orthodoxy or discredit their doctrine. Whatever the case, the theologians of the proto-orthodoxy focused on the severity that inevitably came with matters of eternal salvation. More importantly, the early Church needed, with every element of the reliance implied, heresy for its own sake. As Ehrman illustrates, the Church was able to define

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[4] 'Tertullian: An Injunction Against Heretics', *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe*, ed. E. Peters (2 edn, University of Pennsylvania, 1980), pp. 29-31. '*Compelle Intrare:* The Coercion of Heretics in the *Theodosian Code*, 438', *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe*, ed. E. Peters (University of Pennsylvania, 1980), pp. 42-7.
[5] 'Second Part of the Second Part: Question 11, Heresy', *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, transl. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (2nd edn, 1920).
[6] Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (Oxford, 1971) pp. 167-70.

itself around a supposed correctness that was unique to orthodox Christianity precisely by pinpointing what it was *not*.[7] By defining a precise doctrine, the institution was able to set a precedent of doctrinal correctness, creating a clear boundary between the 'true believer' and the 'heretic'.

The concept of heresy was abundantly clear to the Patristic theologian, as it was reserved solely for errors rooted in doctrine.[8] If one considers the huge significance of structure and authority that would come to be associated with the Church, the absence of polemics against schismatic sects is notable. Despite this notable absence, Lyman's argument maintains the same sound foundations as McGrath's – that of context. The early Church cannot be examined out of context, and the context of late antiquity was a Church that was still defining its doctrine.[9] Although differing liturgical structure may have posed a threat, doctrine was seen as the main threat to the feeble foundations of the proto-orthodox Church. The final catalyst for the constitution of a doctrinally sound Church was the Nicene Controversy, centered on the teachings of the heresiarch Arius. The Church's problem lay in the doctrinal elements, particularly because of their origin: Origen. The championed theologian of early orthodoxy had illustrated one of the leading ideas of the Trinity as three ranks of separate-but-equal. His ideas had been, in the eyes of the Church, perverted by Arius to argue for a hierarchical Trinity – one that completely

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[7] Bart D. Ehrman, *Lost Christianities* (Oxford, 2003) pp. 91, 188-202.
[8] Rebecca J. Lyman, 'Heresiology: the invention of "heresy" and "schism"', *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Constantine to c. 600*, Volume 2, ed. Augustine Casiday, Frederick W. Norris (Cambridge, 2007) pp. 304-6.
[9] Alistair McGrath, *Historical Theology*, (Blackwell Publishers, 1998) pp. 20.

opposed what would become the orthodox concept of the Trinity.[10] The issue of the Trinity, known as the Christological controversy, was defined at the first Council of Nicaea, convened by Constantine in 325 AD. The Council decided on an absolute equality of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, with no internal hierarchy, fundamentally opposing the ideas proposed by the Arian Trinity. By defining the Trinitarian doctrine without explicitly contradicting Arius himself, the Church succeeded in both anathematizing the heretic and saving Origen, making exclusively the Arian 'perversion' the subject of their disdain.[11]

However, few subsequent Patristic heresies called for the delicacy of the Nicene Council. In the later disobedience shown by Pelagian and Nestorian heretics, the Council of Ephesus is all too clear about its intentions. Canon four of the council reads: 'If any clerics should revolt and dare either publicly or privately to hold with Nestorius or Celestius [the disciple of Pelagius], the holy council decides that these be deposed'. [12] Such decrees reaffirmed orthodox need for doctrinal correctness and showed just how critical doctrine had become to the Patristic theologians.

The Council of Ephesus also illustrates another element of late antique orthodoxy, wherein the words 'publicly or privately' are significant.[13] Even clearer in the writing of

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[10] Ehrman, *Lost Christianities*, pp. 151-6.
[11] 'Canons from Nicea 1, 325', *The Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church*, trans. Henry R. Percival (Edinburgh, 1988).
[12] 'Third General Council (431): The Council of Ephesus' *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary*, trans. H.J. Schroeder, (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1937) pp. 75-7.
[13] 'Third General Council (431): The Council of Ephesus' *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Council*, pp. 75-7.

Isidore of Seville, a description of a heretic includes the phrase, 'even though he may not withdraw from the Church'.[14] Quite clearly directed to doctrinal dissenters *within* the framework of the orthodox Church, both examples illustrate the late antique reality that a heretical sect could operate within the structure of orthodoxy. Blatantly heretical sects like the Montanists and the dualistic Gnostics, existed – particularly in the case of the Gnostics –often as secret and elite sects entirely within the Church.[15] Given Ehrman's portrayal of Gnostic polemics against mainstream Christianity and their secretive position as an elite sect within the orthodox system, the Patristic focus on doctrine becomes less a fixation and more a distinctly tangible need to understand orthodoxy enough to identify dissent, even within the Church's own ranks.[16]

Alongside anti-heretical polemics and doctrinal ascertations, Patristic authors were keenly concerned with the origins of heretical sects, a concern maintained by authors well after late antiquity. Although the origin of heresy took on many forms – including demonic inspiration – it was Greco-Roman philosophy that effectively flustered Patristic theologians. In some schools of orthodoxy, including the areas of Carthage, Lycopolis and Seville, decided stances against Greco-Roman philosophy are taken. Tertullian describes what the problem with philosophy is, as '[t]he same things are turned and twisted by heretics and philosophers. The same questions are involved. Where does evil come from? And how? And where does man come from? And how? And… where

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[14] 'St. Isidore of Seville: On the Church and the Sects' *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe*, ed. E. Peters (2nd edn, University of Pennsylvania, 1980) pp. 47-50.
[15] Ehrman, *Lost Christianities*, pp. 122-6.
[16] Ehrman, *Lost Christianities*, pp. 132-4, 185.

does God come from?'[17] Heresy is again drawn back to its etymologic roots, wherein such philosophical questions defy the very concept of orthodox doctrine, as 'it is not lawful to introduce any doctrine of our own choosing, neither may we choose some doctrine which someone else has introduced by his own choice.'[18] Likewise for Isidore, the 'choice' of the heretic is comparable to that of Classical philosophers, 'as in the case of Peripatetic philosophers, the Academics, and the Epicureans and Stoics, or as others do'.[19]

Conversely, the Alexandrian school of thought made no such connection. Between condemnation of Epicurean philosophy and praising Plato as 'more religious' than the heretic, Clement carefully does not discuss the influence of Greco-Roman philosophy.[20] Similarities are acknowledged, like Marcionist sympathies to Platonic and Pythagorean philosophies, but they are merely instances where 'Clément semble suggérer une simple comparaison'. [21] Such instances further discount any implications of heretical origins when he specifically cites Platonic philosophy that contradicts Marcionist doctrine.[22] Despite the evident understanding that heresies did not come *from* philosophy,

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[17] 'Tertullian: An Injunction Against Heretics', *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe*, pp. 29-31.
[18] 'Tertullian: An Injunction Against Heretics', *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe*, pp. 29-31.
[19] 'St. Isidore of Seville: On the Church and the Sects' *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe*, pp. 47-50.
[20] Alain Le Boulluec, *La notion d'hérésie dans la literature grecque II^e^-III^e^ siècles* (Paris, 1985) pp. 288-92.
[21] A translation of the quote reads as follows, 'Clement deems it fit to suggest a simple comparison', from Le Boulluec, *La notion d'hérésie dans la literature grecque*, pp. 288-92.
[22] *Ibid*.

as Alexander of Lycopolis also indicates, there is an underlying sense of philosophy's negative influence, as when he describes the differences between Platonic and Aristotelian notions of 'matter' and the Manichaean notion. This sense is so profound that, despite his own distinctions between Classical philosophy and heretical dualism, Alexander of Lycopolis specifically describes Manichaean tenets as '[t]he Platonic doctrine, not the Christian.'[23] The fact that this association is made illustrates the relentlessness of heresy as a doctrinal concern, where even loose connection sufficed for arguable condemnation.

By the medieval era, 'heresy' had evolved into a creature blending schism and heresy – obedience and doctrine.[24] Although in the second Lateran Council, canon thirty refers specifically to 'schismatics and heretics', canon two of the third Lateran Council unites them irrevocably, as the 'schismatics shall be deprived of the same [as the heretics].'[25] The importance of agreement with the Church had risen, reaching the point where Moore argues that *any* disruption of clerical authority, a schism in any sense, was tantamount to heresy.[26] Within such a definition of heresy, however, the problem of identifying genuine heretics arose. As such, Lambert argues that accusations of heresy were rarely made on doctrinal grounds. Despite his argument, all of the accounts he lists

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[23] Alexander, Bishop of Lycopolis, 'On the Tenets of the Manichæans', *The Writings of Methodius, Alexander of Lycopolis, Peter of Alexandria, and several fragments*, trans. J.B.H. Hawkins (Edinburgh, 1869) pp. 236-66.
[24] Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, (3rd edn, Blackwell Publishing, 1987) pp. 32-40.
[25] *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary*, trans. H.J. Schroeder, (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1937) pp. 194-235
[26] R.I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society* (Blackwell Publishing, 1987) pp. 68-72, 106-12.

of medieval heretical movements show legitimate doctrinal dissent, something that he himself acknowledges.[27]

Heinrich Fichtenau, in sharp contrast, describes the same heretical movements, with detailed descriptions of the contemporary political climate, almost entirely in terms of the doctrinal issues involved.[28] One such example, where the king's own clergy were found guilty of heresy in Orléans circa 1022, the political element comes immediately to the fore. Upon discovery, the heretics – including the Queen's confessor – were burnt at the stake, making the Capetian king the first to institute capital punishment for heresy since the execution of Priscillian – over 600 years prior.[29] The affair led to a fear of heresy propagated by scholars and set a tone of political authority, where it was the *king*, not the Church, which had the final say. Despite different scholarly arguments and although contemporary accounts of the heresy reveal legitimate doctrinal dissent, the process by which the heretics were discovered and sentenced implies a more Fichtenau-inclined scenario where politics and doctrine operated in tandem.[30] If politics dictated any element of the situation, it appears to have been less the *accusations* of heresy and more the *consequences* for the heretics in question. It can thus be seen that, despite growing concerns over non-doctrinal motives, the heresies of the Middle Ages did still operate, at least initially, under the legacy of doctrinal concern.

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[27] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, pp. 20-30.
[28] Heinrich Fichtenau, *Heretics and Scholars in the High Middle Ages 1000-1205,* trans. Denise A. Kaiser (Pennsylvania State University, 1998) pp. 13-51.
[29] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*.
Heinrich Fichtenau, *Heretics and Scholars in the High Middle Ages 1000-1205.*
[30] 'Adémar of Chabannes: Heresy at Orléans' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* trans. Walter L. Wakefield, Evans, Austin P., (Columbia, 1991) pp. 74-6.

CHAPTER 3

THE LEGACIES TO AND FROM SCHOLASTICISM

Even early Christianity was steeped in historic legacies, a requirement for survival in the Roman world out of which it was emerging. In terms of origin, it claimed Judaism; in terms of language, it claimed Greek; in terms of heresy, it took a feature of the Classical world – the refutation. The importance of history in late antiquity was, for the Patristic writers, an opportunity as well as an inspiration, capitalizing on the contemporary cultural values represented. Nearly all writers of the Patristic period used their anti-heretical writings to stir the sentiment of the population in favor of orthodox doctrine.[31] The heretic is demonized via invective, though the extent of the demonization shows itself to have been variable. Epiphanius, for example, carries on across the spectrum, from the mild rebuke of 'See and understand, Sabellius!' to grotesque vilifications of the Gnostics drinking female menstrual fluid and eating aborted fetuses as the blood and body of Christ.[32] Aside from the invective, the straightforward outline of why a heresy was heretical usually had the added effect of vilifying the heresy. Most surviving refutations are based on a clear structure and possess a rational methodology. In the *Panarion*, Epiphanius outlines his structure distinctly, 'proving' all of his statements

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[31] Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, pp. 22-32.
[32] *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis*, trans. Frank Williams, E.J. Brill (New York, 1987) pp. 83-8, 124.

about each heresy by citing personal observation or what is admittedly hearsay, which, for an oral society as existed in late antiquity, was deemed valid as proof.[33]

The fact that refutations held to the notion of proof carries a significance that is compounded by the adoption of Classic rhetoric, which implies an awareness and adherence to the elements of Classical curriculum.[34] John Chrysostom writes against the Marcion and Manichaean heresies in precisely such a manner, addressing each element of the heretical argument and refuting them point-by-point. In the well-recognized style of invective, he allows himself to wax lyrical with regards to 'these wicked doctrines of impiousness', but even then only at the end.[35] Augustine also echoes the rational rebuttal and use of rhetoric, and Alexander of Lycopolis goes so far as to *correct* Manichaean doctrine so that it might be more rationally viable.[36]

Seeking not just to retain the refutation of the Patristic authors, medieval authors ultimately expanded it to face newly emerging heresies. Despite following the methodology of the Patristic authors, Vacarius writes his refutation, not to fellow churchmen, but directly to the heresiarch he was refuting. His refutation, complemented by an account of a theological debate in le Mans, where thirteen heretical tenets are

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[33] *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis*, trans. Frank Williams, E.J. Brill, pp. 122-8.
[34] This is despite the existence of most probably falsified accounts.
[35] John Chrysostom, 'Against Marcionists and Manichæans', *On the Priesthood; Ascetic Treatises; Select Homilies and Letters; Homilies on the Statues*, trans. Philip Schaff (Edinburgh, 1889) pp. 201-7.
[36] Alexander, Bishop of Lycopolis, 'On the Tenets of the Manichæans', *The Writings of Methodius,* pp. 253-4.

refuted, even includes some of the responses of the heresiarch.[37] Indicative of the expanding breadth of the audience to whom the medieval author wrote, refutations took new forms to address everyone from the lay peasant to the highly educated heresiarch.[38] As such, the anti-heretical polemic invariably evolved, expanding the methodology handed down by the Patristic authors to even include the heresiarchs they opposed.

In an attack on the heresies of the twelfth century, Alan of Lille echoes Patristic piecemeal analysis, comparing and contrasting heretics to orthodoxy, philosophy, and Greco-Roman mythology, acknowledging the doctrinal differences between the heresies, using scriptural evidence to refute the heresy and ending, again in a Patristic style, with nearly two dozen reasons as to why heretics are those who 'never attain knowledge of the truth.'[39] His work reflects the increasing fervor in 'perfecting' presented arguments and the concurrent movements pushing the medieval refutation forward, rooted in the works of Patristic authors and aptly named Scholasticism.

Being a highly defined way of presenting theological material, Scholasticism left a marked impact on the refutations that would follow in its wake.[40] Perhaps most notable in the highly structured writings of Thomas Aquinas; his four articles against heresy

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[37] 'Henry: the debate with the monk William, 1133-5' *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, ed. R.I. Moore (Edward Arnold, 1975) pp. 46-60.
[38] 'The Letter of Master Vacarius against the Errors of Hugo Speroni' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* trans. Walter L. Wakefield, Evans, Austin P., (Columbia, 1991) pp. 152-8.
[39] 'Alan of Lille: A Scholar's Attack on Heretics' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* trans. Walter L. Wakefield, Evans, Austin P., (Columbia, 1991) pp. 214-20.
[40] McGrath, *Historical Theology*, pp. 104-8.

include argument and counterargument with scriptural support for both sides.[41] While the defined structure of Scholasticism was neither restricted to the medieval refutation nor characteristic of it, Scholasticism helped shape the growing expectation of proof in anti-heretical writings. The Scholastic teaching texts against heresies, dating from well before Aquinas, used argument and counterargument in a revised polemic that logically, if scripturally, 'proved' the orthodox perspective. Subsequent compilations of teaching texts included anti-heretical polemics in the style of the *summa*. The intention of later such texts to be used as guides for preaching against heresy, such as Inquisitorial manuals, show that the expectation of proof in rhetoric was becoming a practical element as well as an intellectual one.[42]

More subtle and less tangible than the legacy of rhetoric was the legacy of fear passed down by the Patristic authors. Justifiably terrified of heretics such as the Gnostics and Manichaeans, Patristic writings imbued the early medieval scholars with that same sense of fear coupled with growing desperation to see something done.[43] Statements like Alan of Lille's, that 'among moderns there are not those who are able to resist renewed heresies, to uproot those which sprout anew,' indicate the extent to which the fear of heresy ran. Not only was heresy growing, it was growing from the very same heresies that the great Christian theologians were afraid of and, this time, the Church was less able

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[41] 'Second Part of the Second Part: Question 11, Heresy', *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*.
[42] Célestin Douais, 'Subjects and Texts for Preaching against Heresy' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* trans. Walter L. Wakefield, Evans, Austin P., (Columbia, 1991) pp. 297-300.
[43] Ehrman, *Lost Christianities*, pp 127-9.

to fight back.[44] While Alan of Lille's work had not reached the level of demonization of Epiphanius' Gnostics, the propagation of terror seems, initially, out-of-place.[45] The medieval Church, after all, was not subject to the rampant uncertainty of the terrified Patristic theologians. Furthermore, his was not a uniquely personal sentiment, as writings before and after reflect similar thoughts: Aquinas later breathes the same fervor and desperation for action, where on the heretics' side 'there is the sin, whereby they deserve not only to be separated from the Church by excommunication, but also to be severed from the world by death.'[46]

However, the fears of scholars were not as unfounded as one would initially assume, particularly as their fears were reflected in the Episcopal and papal authorities and in the lower clergy. Ecclesiastic movements like the Truce of God and the Gregorian reform were failing, evident in the documentation on the Truce of God. Referred to both in its initial mention in canon thirteen of the first Lateran Council and in canon twelve of the second Lateran Council, the Truce of God is mentioned yet again in a final plea in canon twenty-one of the third Lateran Council, wherein breaking of the Truce of God

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[44] 'Alan of Lille: A Scholar's Attack on Heretics' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* pp. 214-20.
[45] 'Adhémar of Chabannes: early heresies in the Languedoc' *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, pp. 9-10.
The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis, pp. 82-99.
[46] Anselm, 'Heretics at Châlons-sur-Marne and Bishop Wazo' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* trans. Walter L. Wakefield, Evans, Austin P., (Columbia, 1991) pp. 89-93. 'Second Part of the Second Part: Question 11, Heresy', *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*.

would mandate excommunication.[47] Such reiteration and punitive action is certainly not supportive of a successful initiative. The Gregorian reform was similarly affective, with heresies rising from *within* its orthodox roots, such as the originally Augustinian heresiarch Norbert of Xantern.[48] It was scenarios like this that fuelled fear within the Church, panicking the clergy and increasing paranoia among intellectuals. Afraid of straying preachers, the failure of synodal decrees, the corruption within the clergy, and the abundance of popular movements both orthodox and heretical and already predisposed to the fear of dissidence passed down by the Patristic authors, the Church was ready and willing to use every resource available to them. Decrees like Pope Lucius III's *Ad Abolendum* are a testament to precisely how precarious the situation was, as the bull contained – most importantly – a resounding condemnation of *all* heretics and sympathizers, along with the right of secular authority to punish condemned heretics with *whatever* level of severity deemed fit.[49]

Although scholars did not necessarily propagate fears of heresy, panic was hardly curtailed by the writings of the era, which often tended towards the label 'Manichaean' and overlooked the nuanced realities of popular heresy. As various sects sprang up, the Church found itself in a quandary wherein the semi-arbitrary assignation of 'heresy' failed to be specific enough while accounts of specific doctrines had become too plentiful for the existing number of heresies. The 'time-honored custom' of labeling heresies based

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[47] '*Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary*, trans. H.J. Schroeder, (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1937) pp. 177-235.
[48] Fichtenau, *Heretics and Scholars in the High Middle Ages*, pp. 48-51.
[49] 'Pope Lucius III: The Decretal *Ad Abolendum*, 1184' *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe*, ed. E. Peters (2nd edn, University of Pennsylvania, 1980) pp. 170-3.

on their Patristic equivalent, while an increasingly prevalent trend, had its own set of complications.[50] Where heresies were deemed 'Manichaean', the single label might have been intended for 'the Manichaean and Patarine heretics and against the Passagians, the Circumcisers, and many other heretics,' indicative of how misleading Patristic titles had the capacity to become when used *en masse*.[51] This complication did not go unnoticed; as medieval authors often state that their labels were justified, using such claims as 'others were proved to be Manichaeans.'[52] In the face of the difficulties of Patristic titular labels, there was a decided movement toward the structure of Scholasticism. 'If you will reread the various accounts of heresies by Augustine, you will find that this resembles none more than that of the Manichaeans,' is Guibert de Nogent's justification for his 'Manichaean' heresy, stepping from undisclosed 'proof' to a clear, repeatable methodology of doctrinal analysis that would be picked up, and later distorted, by subsequent authors.[53]

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[50] Fichtenau, *Heretics and Scholars in the High Middle Ages*, pp. 70-83.
[51] 'Subjects and Texts for Preaching against Heresy' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* trans. Walter L. Wakefield, Evans, Austin P., (Columbia, 1991) pp. 297-300.
[52] Adhémar of Chabannes, 'Early heresies in the Languedoc' *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, ed. R.I. Moore (Edward Arnold, 1975) pp. 9-10.
[53] Guibert of Nogent, '"Manichaeans" near Soissons' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* trans. Walter L. Wakefield, Evans, Austin P., (Columbia, 1991) pp. 101-4.

CHAPTER 4

THE ORIGINS AND RAMIFICATIONS OF POPULAR FERVOR

Historians tend to agree on the state of affairs in medieval Christendom, where failures in the Truce of God and Gregorian reform met increased literacy and crusading fervor and caused a significant wave of backlash onto the Church, including popular heresy. Such views are reflected by statements such as Fichtenau's that '[l]ay heretics… were concerned less with dogmatic matters than with the inner stability provided by a rule of conduct,' and Moore's declaration that heresy sprung from the ashes of failed Gregorian reform.[54] While there is no doubt that the Truce of God and the Gregorian reform did not produce the intended results, the simultaneous increase in the use of vernacular language and the increasing literacy of the era are generally looked at separately from issues of ecclesiastic reform. However, canons nine and ten of the fourth Lateran Council provide for theology and scripture to be preached and given in the vernacular and canon eleven mandates *gratis* education for all those unable to make provisions for their own education.[55] While not disputing the impact of calls for reform, the addressing of the vernacular that occurred in the canons of the fourth Lateran Council might indicate that the usage of vernacular in preaching and scripture might have

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[54] Fichtenau, *Heretics and Scholars in the High Middle Ages*, pp. 51.
Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*, pp. 19-23.
[55] 'The Twelfth Ecumenical Council (1215): Lateran IV' *Disciplinary Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary*, trans. H.J. Schroeder, (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1937) pp. 236-96.

contributed to the popularity of sectarian heresies, especially given the role of wandering preachers in many of the smaller uprisings. In particular, the Waldensian heresy may be examined, as it is well renowned for its focus on the use of vernacular scripture.[56] Valdés was inspired, allegedly, by a *jongleur*, supporting implications of a vernacular motive in the heresy and active ecclesiastic involvement in vernacular movements is further supported by Valdés's early acclamation by Pope Alexander III.[57]

Isidore of Seville commented on an early distinction between 'orthodoxy' and heresy', saying that '[t]he conventicles of the heretics are not like this, but are drawn together tightly in each region, not scattered and diffused throughout the whole world.'[58] The proto-orthodox Church, although composed of various schools and sects, banded together under a basic premise – sought to keep provisions for heterodoxy open. In fact, canon seven of the Council of Nicea specifically allows for theological variation between the provincial schools, effectively negating *any* future arguments against heterodoxy within the Church.[59] While admirable, such a move was essential for the survival of the Church. The orthodox factions were a distinct minority everywhere outside of Rome; heretical sects had the upper hand in terms of numbers, sphere of influence and authority. Particularly notable in Edessa, the *Palûtians*, as the proto-orthodox followers were known, were so few in number that the dominant sect of Marcionites referred to

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[56] Fichtenau, *Heretics and Scholars in the High Middle Ages*, pp. 70-80.
[57] 'The conversion of Valdés and its consequences' *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, ed. R.I. Moore (Edward Arnold, 1975) pp. 111-3.
[58] 'St. Isidore of Seville: On the Church and the Sects' *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe*, pp. 47-50.
[59] 'Canons from Nicea 1, 325', from *The Seven Ecumenical Councils*.

themselves as *the* Christians and hardly feared the smaller sect.[60] The eminence of the heretical sect is thus evident, to such an extent that, in Edessa, it was the orthodoxy that was marginalized as heretical by the dominant Marcionites. Even after the 'triumph' of orthodox Christianity, that is, the adoption of the Palûtian sect by the Byzantine emperors, the Church faced multiple heretical sects, such as the Marcionite heresy, with continuing eminence. The *Theodosian Code*, the legal commission established by the Emperor Theodosius II in the fifth century, outlines provisions against ten sects specifically by name and sects like the Arians, Donatists and Manichaeans flourished long after passage of these early fifth century decrees.[61] Further controversies, like the Christological controversy after the Council of Nicaea, are clear examples of the very real opposition the orthodox Church faced in contemporary heretical sects.

Not so differently, the medieval Church faced threats, not just from heretical sects, but also from heresies arising out of orthodox movements. With movements flitting back and forth into heresy, like the Humiliati, this period can be seen as a highly volatile era for the formation of religious movements of all types. The Church seemed very aware of this, with the third Lateran Council including decrees explicitly stating that all new movements, including crusading orders, were required to operate under the authority of the papacy and episcopates.[62] These orthodox movements, from the larger ones such as

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[60] Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, pp. 22-32.
[61] '*Compelle Intrare*: The Coercion of Heretics in the *Theodosian Code*, 438' *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe*, pp. 42-7.
[62] 'The Eleventh General Council (1179): Third Lateran Council', from *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary*, trans. H.J. Schroeder, (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1937) pp. 214-35.

the Dominicans and Franciscans to little-known spiritual preachers, certainly support the trend of reform fervor – both heterodox and heretical.

Given the little information available about smaller movements, the actual occurrence of heresy might have been quite different from the implications of impassioned commentaries. In fact, the account of the synod at Arras ends as follows:

> The men who shortly before had adhered to heretical unbelief did not fully understand these words, which were spoken in Latin. Through an interpreter they head the sentence of excommunication and the exposition of the profession of faith in the vernacular. They confessed with a solemn oath that they abjured what had been condemned, and believed what is believed by the faithful.[63]

The entire heresy here appears more a misunderstanding than anything else, rooted entirely in understanding (or *mis*understanding) orthodox versus heretical dogma. The previous statement regarding the considerations that would be made for vernacular preaching in the fourth Lateran Council supports such a notion. Lambert, unlike Fichtenau and Moore, appears to support this notion, pointing out that even the most rural 'hot spots' of medieval heresy were primarily in Languedoc and Lombardy. Considering that these two regions had significantly higher economic vibrancy and class mobility with an ever-growing new class of artisans – regardless of their education – the use of the

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[63] 'The Synod of Arras, 1025' *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, ed. R.I. Moore (Edward Arnold, 1975) pp. 15-9.

vernacular quite possibly played a significant role in the occurrence(s) of heresy.[64] The Inquisitor Bernard Gui advocates a similar perspective, blaming the blatantly doctrinal heresy of the dualistic Cathars for using vernacular preaching and texts to 'infect' the populace rather than their doctrinal dissent.[65] The reform zeal may have merely been a spiritual reasoning rooted in the populace – and in the rapidly expanding vernacular.

Just as heresy was growing in occurrence and popularity, popular antipathy to heresy also seemed to be growing. From the 'habitual headstrong madness of the French… [where] they identified heretics by pallor alone' to alleged displays of hysterics because of heretical contempt of the sacraments, popular response covers a wide range.[66] The reaction of *orthodox* lay people, however, appears consistently punitive: two twelfth century accounts show, essentially, medieval vigilantism, whereupon '[i]n popular reaction against the heretics some were lynched' and 'the faithful people, fearing clerical leniency, rushed to the prison, seized the men, and having laid a fire under them, burnt them all together outside the city.'[67] Fuelled by ecclesiastic demonization of the heretics, such stories gave the people every reason and desire to actively persecute the so-called

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[64] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, pp. 87-94.
[65] 'Bernard Gui's Description of Heresies' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* trans. Walter L. Wakefield, Evans, Austin P., (Columbia, 1991) pp. 373-445.
[66] Anselm, 'Heretics at Châlons-sur-Marne and Bishop Wazo' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* pp. 89-93.
'Legation in the Languedoc: Henry of Clairvaux' *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, ed. R.I. Moore (Edward Arnold, 1975) pp. 116-22.
[67] 'Orvieto: the martyrdom of Peter Parenzo, 1199' *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, ed. R.I. Moore (Edward Arnold, 1975) pp. 127-32.
Guibert of Nogent, '"Manichaeans" near Soissons' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* pp. 101-4.

unbelievers.[68] Adhémar of Chabannes talks of a heresiarch who 'carried about with him dust from dead children which quickly made anyone who came into contact with it into a Manichee,' a description oddly reminisce of Epiphanius' invective against the Gnostics and their feasts on aborted fetuses.[69]

Given the re-adoption of invective and the popular reaction to heretics, it is hardly surprising that the *Theodosian Code* evidences a secular anti-heretical vein operating concomitantly with the Church as well as a precedent for secular action stretching back to late antiquity. The acceptance of secular action was thus already a precedent – supported by *Ad Abolendum* and Aquinas's argument that the Church should not interfere with secular punishment for heresy, regardless of the severity.[70] In fact, the very first properly documented heresy of the medieval West, the aforementioned eleventh century heresy in Orléans, is one such example. The punishment was that of the secular authority, as 'At the king's command… the queen struck out of the eye of Stephen, who had once been her confessor… [t]hey were taken outside the walls of the city, a large fire was lit in a certain cottage, and they were all burned'.[71] Increasingly frustrated by a lack of methods by

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[68] Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*, pp. 146-53.
[69] There is nothing to suggest that Adhémar of Chabannes may have been familiar with, or even had access to, Epiphanius' work.
'Adhémar of Chabannes: early heresies in the Languedoc' *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, pp. 9-10.
The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis, pp. 82-99.
[70] Anna Comnena, 'The Bogomils, c. 1110', *The Alexiad of the Princess Anna Comnena*, trans. Elizabeth A.S. Dawes, (London, 1918) pp. 412-5.
'Second Part of the Second Part: Question 11, Heresy', *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*.
[71]'The Synod of Orléans, 1022' *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, ed. R.I. Moore (Edward Arnold, 1975) pp. 10-15.

which they could retaliate and increasingly overshadowed by the authority of the secular government, the Church resorted to ever more drastic measures to deal with burgeoning movements.[72]

There remained, within the problems of how to deal with identified heretics, an underlying issue of what to *call* said heretics. Lacking any clear labeling system, and subject to popular influences ignorant of the Patristic heresies used by scholars, the naming of individual heresies proved a trial for both the Church and the lay community. On fairly rare instances, it was the popular name that ultimately defined the heresy, such as with the Publicani who, despite early clerical efforts to dub it 'Manichaean', was ultimately named for the vernacular title of *Populicani*.[73] More often there was a near complete disregard of vernacular titles, such as the heresy of Henry of le Mans, which is never labeled as anything other than 'heretical' by the fairly large array of clerical writings on it. Although Bernard of Clairvaux does write that the movement was called *Ariani*, based on the weavers that made up a significant percentage of the sect, even in a situation where the heresy is never given any other potential titles, the vernacular name is limited to one passing mention among over half a dozen texts.[74]

In general, the Church had fairly good reason to avoid the adaptation of the vernacular name, if only because they rarely remained consistent between regions. The Church's frustration with precisely this issue is evident in the third Lateran Council, which states

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[72] Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, pp. 94-6.
[73] 'The Publicani: at Arras, 1162-3' *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, ed. R.I. Moore (Edward Arnold, 1975) pp. 80-2.
[74] 'Henry: St Bernard's mission, 1145' *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, ed. R.I. Moore (Edward Arnold, 1975) pp. 41-6.

'since in Gascogne, in the territory of Albi, in Toulouse and its neighborhood, and in other places, the perversity of the heretics, whom some call Cathari, others Patarini, and others again Publicani (Pauliciani?)'.[75] Although the Cathars, Patarines, Publicani and Paulicians were quite possibly separate sects, the confusion expressed by the gathered episcopate illustrates the very real problem with regional vernacular titles. In attempt to mitigate the problems associated with such an *ad hoc* naming system, the Church was quite possibly the inadvertent creator of the greatest medieval misnomer – the eventual euphemizing of 'Manichaean' and 'heretical'. From administrative uses, like *Ad Abolendum*'s disregard for names, condemning 'all heresy, howsoever it may be named', the unification of all heresies passed readily from written legacy into popular fervor.[76]

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[75] 'The Eleventh General Council (1179): Third Lateran Council', from *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary*, trans. H.J. Schroeder, (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1937) pp. 214-35.
[76] 'Pope Lucius III: The Decretal *Ad Abolendum*, 1184' *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe,* pp. 170-3.

CHAPTER 5

NO-ONE EXPECTS THE INQUISITION

The ramifications of logic-based labeling of heresy echoed well after the twelfth century, with the title of 'Manichaean' growing into a pre-justified accusation for heretics, particularly for the smaller sects and the rapidly growing Cathars. Scholastic efforts shifted steadily from labeling heresies to identifying heretics, parallel to the growing popular fervor. Teaching texts arose for those preaching against heresy – not heresies – and one such text is directed against 'Manichaean heretics'. The 'Manichaean's are at the end of the text defined to be 'the Manichaean and Patarine… the Passagians, the Circumcisers and many other heretics'.[77] The teaching texts are the result of a strange amalgamation of Scholastic 'proofs' of heretical Manichaeism, the use of vernacular for the sake of comprehension by the common laypeople and the ecclesiastic administrative desire to keep the situation within their collective grasp. Driven by the need of medieval authors to identify the heretics they were fighting, the Patristic legacy of Manichaeism surpassed that of all other Patristic heresies. Arising as the collective term for heretical, for the scholars, clerics and laypeople, 'Manichaean' was ultimately the result of separate efforts all striving for efficiency. Without anticipating the forthcoming consequences, a consensus comprehensible to all parties had finally been reached.

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[77] Douais 'Subjects and Texts for Preaching against Heresy' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* pp. 297-300.

Supporting the medieval movement, yet again, lays a Patristic precedent, stretching back to the late antique stance on Greco-Roman philosophy. From the respectful wariness of the philosophers of the ancient world to the hostility of the adamant Scriptural theologians, the ever-growing idea was that heresy was a result of a 'contaminated' Christianity.[78] The notion was externalized, making heresy a 'corrupted' Christianity even to those who strove to understand the origins of popular heresy.[79] Re-manifesting centuries later, the target of such contamination views shifted from the pre-Christian philosophers to the Patristic heresies. The perception of 'heresy,' as it ultimately became known to the average cleric of the High Middle Ages, was held by the conviction that '[a]ll of the [heretics] followed their own masters, but all have the name Manichean in common because the heresy of all of them originated from Mani.'[80] Uniting all the heretical sects under one banner was no convenient impulse; scholars made careful connections between the rising heretical tides. Although most likely unfounded and driven by paranoia rather than legitimate ties, the medieval world was confident in the consensus. It had found the source of infection.

In the world of the highly educated and literary authors, Scholasticism had created a methodological system of labeling and identifying heresies. In the world of renewed religiosity and popular movements, invectives against heretics had instilled a sense of righteous indignation in the populace. In the world of crusading fervor and increasingly

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[78] Ehrman, *Lost Christianities*, pp. 190-3.
[79] See Section I, pages 4-6, for support of this point.
[80] 'Eckbert of Schönau: sermon against the Cathars' *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, ed. R.I. Moore (Edward Arnold, 1975) pp. 88-94.

drastic actions, desperation and indignation prompted a call for action in the name of God. From the beginning of medieval heresies in the early eleventh century, intellectual methodologies met popular fervor and, under the Church's insurmountable authority, exploded in the thirteenth century. The Inquisition arose from the ashes of the explosive meeting of careful identification and fevered action. In the Inquisition manuals of the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, not so very much later, the exact results of this shift are illuminated in books filled with the doctrine, practice and – most importantly – the issues over which a heretic might reveal himself as such.[81] The structural precision of the earlier authors had evolved, growing from Patristic refutation to clean methods of systematized identification and along the way it had joined forces with the unyielding dogmatism fuelled by the Patristic legacy of invectives. Such ramifications were the utterly unforeseen substantiation of a scholastic rhetoric that manifested into misleading supposition that *heresy*, as a whole, held the entirety of its roots in the teachings of Mani.[82]

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[81] 'Bernard Gui's Description of Heresies' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* pp. 373-445.
[82] Anselm of Alessandria, 'On heretics' *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, ed. R.I. Moore (Edward Arnold, 1975) pp. 145-54.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The idea of a single, unified heretic was an incredibly complex creation borne of many different spheres of influence. Above all, however, it signified an evolution from the Patristic ideas that prompted the use of the Manichaean heresy in particular. From the Patristic rhetoric of invective, by the Middle Ages the movement of Scholasticism had used the precedent of *logic* to create a machine for efficient labeling and identifying of heresies. Also from the Patristic rhetoric of invective, the medieval Inquisitorial manuals used the tradition of vilification of a heretic to explain *the* heretic – unifying numerous amorphous enemies under a single title. Though there were, evidently, documents that defied this shift, the overall change in medieval thought is illustrated from the earliest days of the Inquisition to the fervor of the Albigensian Crusade.

The fact that medieval refutations held to the notion of proof carries a significance that is increased by the adoption of Patristic rhetoric by medieval authors. This significance implies an adherence to, even if not an awareness of, elements of the Patristic curriculum – and, by extension, perhaps the Classical curriculum as well. Likewise, characteristics of the Patristic refutation, namely the arguably exaggerated vilification of heretics, remained strong in the medieval invective. However, the Scholastic movement ultimately began to mirror popular sentiment within the skeletal structure of the Patristic invective. The incorporation of popular fervor led to a shift from the labeling, and vilifying, of individual heresies to what sought to become a practical and efficient method of *identifying* heretics. The ultimate goal of Scholasticism, with

regards to heresy, came to be a methodological system of identifying *heretics* – regardless of what type of heretic may be in question.

For the medieval era, as early as Alan of Lille in the early twelfth century, it is not any particular brand of heresy that will 'never attain knowledge of the truth,' but rather *all* heretics, equally.[83] Although Alan of Lille's particular usage, truth versus falsehoods-portrayed-as-truths, is most probably taken from the shaky foundations of the Patristic *orthodox* church, which used heresies to define itself, the medieval church appears to have not recognized this nuance. Where the Patristic church had used an ambiguous *other* to define itself, the medieval church attempted to use an equally (if not more) ambiguous *other* to define *the other*. Caught between the semantics of vernacular dialects, the righteous indignation of the orthodox populace, the rhetoric of scholars and theologians, and the need for the clergy and episcopate to maintain some sort of authority in the face of a strong precedent for secular action, the Church saw itself as facing huge amounts of both internal and external pressure. Decrees like *Ad Abolendum* near the end of the twelfth century are indicative of the extent of the problem the Church believed it faced

Furthermore, *Ad Abolendum* shows the administrative stance on heretical names. Where the Patristic church, seen in the Council of Ephesus, addressed the *origin* of heresies with a relative lenience on condemned heretics, the medieval church, particularly

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[83] 'Alan of Lille: A Scholar's Attack on Heretics' *Heresies of the High Middle Ages,* trans. Walter L. Wakefield, Evans, Austin P., (Columbia, 1991) pp. 214-20.

in the Lateran Councils and *Ad Abolendum*, addressed the condemnation of heretics.[84] The shift is marked, leaving no punishment too great for the condemned heretic and, most importantly, marking the sect of the heresy as unimportant. It was to be 'all heresy, howsoever it may be named', a unification of all heresies, regardless of mitigating circumstances, and it became a written legacy that would be implemented across the orthodox west.[85]

Where the early Church faced Patristic heresies with an eye towards defining its own doctrine, the medieval Church faced its own heresies with the intention of solidifying its authority. Presiding over an increasingly literate populace, the reactions of the Church became increasingly drastic as compared to Patristic precedents. Just as the shape of heresy had changed, the form that ecclesiastic reaction took had changed, irrevocably. Although the sentiments behind reactive institutions such as the Inquisition are incredibly complex, the threshold to a new type of Church had been crossed. It was reaction that would be repeated, from the later Spanish Inquisition to the violence of the Protestant Reformation. However, the root of such a change lay within the ambiguities of medieval heresy, from the sometimes-heretical sects of growing Orthodox factions to the attempts to unify all heretics under the created title of the medieval Manichee.

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[84] 'Third General Council (431): The Council of Ephesus' *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary*, trans. H.J. Schroeder, (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1937) pp. 75-7.
[85] 'Pope Lucius III: The Decretal *Ad Abolendum*, 1184' *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe,* pp. 170-3.

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